

CHALLENGE



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#RiseUptown

'We won't back down!'



Antiracist fighters in Chicago demand quality housing for workers

CHICAGO, October 18— A resilient and resourceful collective of multiracial fighters is keeping up the fight to demand safe and supportive housing against the capitalist bosses and their politician lackeys. In spite of plunging autumn temperatures and countless other obstacles, #RiseUptown grows with working-class support. Safe housing and livable housing conditions are in diametrical opposition to the needs of capitalism. We will continue to face this nightmare until we organize a mass international communist party to smash capitalism and build a new egalitarian world built on our collective needs and development.

The #RiseUptown movement kicked off in earnest over a month ago when dozens of pro-housing fighters occupied an unused parking lot next to Weiss Hospital in the city's Uptown neighborhood (see CHALLENGE, 9/21). The parking lot has been slated to become new luxury housing in the mostly immigrant worker and rapidly gentrifying neighborhood. #RiseUptown was able to maintain a collective space with food, shelter, medicine and community for over 11 days in the lot before being forcibly removed by the racist Chicago Police Department (CPD).

Worldwide, capitalism is a colossal failure, unable and unwilling to provide billions of workers with the basic necessities of shelter, food, and medicine. The bosses put their profits and power over working-class lives every day (see article, page 5). Members of the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) are continuing to support the #RiseUptown struggle in modest ways, connecting with local mass organizations, and holding CHALLENGE sales in Uptown. PLP is committed to the fight alongside our class to not only secure our basic needs but to overthrow the profit system entirely!

Workers' lives matter

Though #RiseUptown is a relatively small movement, it has proved to be a real thorn in the bosses' side, so much that the racists have been working overtime to try to snuff out the fightback. After the encampment was forced off the abandoned parking lot, the forces regrouped in a nearby park area across the street to begin planning next steps and strategy.

But even this space was deemed unacceptable by the ruthless and racist bosses. Barely had tents been put up before more demands to vacate were placed by city agencies. The reason? That stretch

of park had been designated as a "migratory bird sanctuary" and the human workers would be in the way! Although it's doubtful that anyone involved in #RiseUptown is "anti-bird" or "anti-nature," we all agreed that it was indicative of a system with priorities completely out of whack, to once more displace homeless workers. Only under a profit system can the lives of birds be more valuable than the lives of workers.

On top of the uncertainty and fear associated with being uprooted, workers staying outdoors in the area have faced straight-up fascist violence from the bosses' forces. Around the time of the parking lot occupation, Wayne, a worker from a different encampment who supported the protest, confronted a security guard and a physical fight went down. The fight was broken up then, but later that night Wayne was beaten to death in his tent.

Certain details of the murder remain unclear, but all of us suspect this fascist guard, with complicity, if not outright support of the CPD. We know that we're unlikely to see anything resembling justice from the capitalist state for Wayne and so many other victims of this system, but through building the fightback to crush all fascists for good we can honor his memory and ensure his death did not happen in vain.

Capitalism can't and won't solve the housing crisis

Housing, just like any other good or service produced under capitalism, is fundamentally created to serve as a commodity to be sold for profit. When the bosses' media pouts about a housing "crisis," what they are really complaining about is an inability to sell homes and apartments. Meanwhile, countless workers around the world are forced to go without shelter entirely while buildings sit empty, all because of the bosses' profits!

Chicago, which has long been a stronghold for the liberal finance capital Big Fascist wing of the U.S. ruling class (see glossary on page 6), is no exception to this capitalist rule. With the onset of the coronavirus pandemic and thousands of workers in the city being instantly cut off from income and other support services, the compound crises of homelessness, mental health struggles, and hunger have sharply intensified.

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JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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OUR FIGHT

- ★Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.
- ★The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today’s world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.
- ★Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world’s workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.
- ★While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim “communism is dead,” capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.
- ★Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society’s benefits and burdens.
- ★Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of “race.” Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.
- ★Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.
- ★Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.
- ★Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion’s false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.
- ★Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

CONTACT US

Email
desafio.challenge@gmail.com

Mail
Box 808 GPO, Brooklyn, NY 11202

Internet
www.plp.org

Twitter, Facebook, Instagram:
@PLPchallenge

WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP’s criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a “following” around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual’s writing of an article.

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Editorial

Ukraine Escalation

Fascism and war ahead

As the military conflict in Ukraine escalates, it shows just how unstable the world situation is today. With U.S. imperialists deeply divided and in steep decline, Western Europe in political chaos, Russian imperialists aligning with U.S. arch-rival China, and both rulers and workers beset by the latest international crisis of capitalism, competing bosses are speeding toward full-blown fascism and World War III.

Over the last two weeks alone, Ukraine’s nazi-laden military—propped up by the U.S. and European Union—blasted a critical Russian supply line in Crimea and shelled the Russian-controlled city of Donetsk. Russia retaliated with strikes on Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital, using cruise missiles and drones supplied by Iran, another U.S. arch-enemy. Thirty percent of Ukraine’s power stations were destroyed, and workers and children were killed on both sides. More than six thousand civilians have died since the war began in February (statista.com). Tens of thousands more face forcible dislocation as Russia imposes martial law on disputed territories.

No matter which imperialist ultimately wins, workers will ALWAYS lose in the bosses’ wars—unless we organize and turn them into wars for communist revolution. Only when the international working class is won over to communism, a society run by and for workers, can we end the bosses’ genocidal imperialist wars for good.

As U.S. and Europe decay, WWII inches closer

Although the European Union (EU) has joined the U.S. in passing anti-Russia sanctions, its dependence on Russian oil and gas has constrained how far it can go. “This consumption pattern has put the bloc in an extremely awkward position as the Kremlin continues its military aggression in Ukraine while it profits from sky-high energy prices” (Euronews, 3/5). While the sanctions’ impact on Russia has been limited (cnn.com, 9/16), inflation and high energy prices are battering the U.S. and EU economies. Britain, the most reliable U.S. ally, is in an out-of-control spiral of inflation and recession (BBC, 10/12).

The old liberal world order is in shambles. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the U.S.-led military alliance formed in 1949 to counter the Soviet Union, is growing unwieldy and weaker by the minute. From Italy to Sweden to Spain, openly fascist parties are taking or sharing power or surging in popularity. In France, with the liberal fascist government rocked by a general strike, the rising nazi National Rally party is calling for an end to sanctions against Russia and has slowed the flow of French weaponry to Ukraine (Al Mayadeen, 9/18). In Germany, Chancellor Olaf Scholz “ is facing political backlash from opposition parties and members of his own coalition over the question of sending heavier military equipment” (foreignpolicy.com, 9/27).

Meanwhile, Russia has deepened its ties with China, the main threat to U.S. imperialist dominance: “[T]otal goods traded between China and Russia surged 31 percent to \$117 billion during the first eight months of 2022 compared to the same period last year” (foreignpolicy.com, 10/22).

The powerful BRICS coalition (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), with 40 percent of the world’s population, has effectively backed Russia by staying neutral on Ukraine. India abstained from a United Nations Security Council vote to condemn Russia’s invasion (Washington Post, 10/10). Led by Saudi Arabia, the oil-exporting coalition of OPEC Plus—which includes Russia and Iran—undermined U.S./NATO sanctions against Russia by agreeing to a production cut that will bolster Russia’s revenues (Foreign Affairs, September/October 2022).

Imperialists’ weakness and volatility

Russia’s rulers have their share of weaknesses: a relatively small GDP (11th in the world), stagnant growth, and a heavy reliance on petroleum in a world that is slowly but surely reducing its dependence on fossil fuels

(Georank.org, 2022). But like their counterparts in China, the Russian bosses have one big advantage over their rivals in the U.S. They are significantly closer to full-blown fascism, with a more united and disciplined capitalist ruling class that can maneuver more quickly and efficiently.

Although Russia has lost ground on Ukraine battlefields of late, the U.S. bosses have more fundamental problems. They are facing a sharp decline in military recruiting, and with “China and Russia challenging U.S. leadership globally, the lack of qualified recruits could become a fundamental national security handicap” (bgov.com, 9/21). While Putin’s recent military draft has been internally attacked and resisted, it’s difficult to imagine how stumbling President Joe Biden and a fractured U.S. ruling class could even try to pull one off.

The U.S. Big Fascists of multinational finance capital, represented by the Democratic Party, have stayed unified to this point in sending tens of billions of dollars in weapons to Ukraine. But their hands may soon be tied by the “America First” Small Fascists—including a crop of anti-interventionist military veterans—who have hijacked the Republican Party. (See glossary, page 6) With the Republicans strongly favored to retake control of the House of Representatives in the November elections, the party’s second- and third-ranking leaders “wouldn’t commit to... keeping the aid flowing”” (Defense News, 9/16). House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy made his intentions clear: “I think people are gonna be sitting in a recession and they’re not going to write a blank check to Ukraine. They just won’t do it” (Washington Post, 10/18).

Turn the guns around!

As three nuclear imperialist powers lock horns over who will control the world’s resources, they represent extreme danger and mass death for the working class worldwide. We cannot be fooled into picking a side in the bosses’ dogfights for supremacy. Workers in Russia are showing the potential for rejecting the bosses’ lethal nationalism. More than 200,000 have fled the country to avoid conscription into the military (msn.com, 9/28). Thousands of workers in 32 cities took to the streets against Putin’s draft, despite brutal police violence and the threat of prison time for breaking Russia’s anti-protest laws (The Guardian, 9/21).

The working class has a long and courageous history of fighting back In 1905, sailors led by communists on the Russian battleship Potemkin rebelled and killed the ship’s officers. They sailed to Odessa, where a mass insurrection and strikes against the Russian bosses were in full force. When Czarist battleships were sent to intercept the rebels, their sailors refused to fire. The rebels escaped and sank the Potemkin to keep it out of the bosses’ murderous hands. Many of those sailors later helped build the Bolshevik movement that led the working class of Russia to power in 1917.

In 1972, Black sailors aboard the USS Kitty Hawk rebelled against racist attacks and the Vietnam War. According to the historian H. Bruce Franklin, the fightback grew out of “a coherent antiwar movement called SOS (Stop Our Ships/Support Our Sailors) that emerged on three of the gigantic aircraft carriers crucial to the Tonkin Gulf Strategy.” For two days, as Black workers fought with sailors loyal to the U.S. Navy, the ship was unable to launch its planes to attack North Vietnam. After more fighting broke out on the Kitty Hawk’s oiler, the USS Hasayampa, the Kitty Hawk was forced to retire to California, “where it underwent a ‘six-month refitting job.’ The sailors’ movement had thus removed this major aircraft carrier from the war.” Several other carriers were sabotaged or set on fire, with thousands of crew members signing antiwar petitions, publishing onboard antiwar newspapers, and jumping ship to avoid service in the Vietnam genocide.

We must learn from the past. The power of the working class lies in refusing to fight for any group of fascist bosses. Only an organized, international working class, won to communist ideas, can smash the imperialists’ wars once and for all. Join us!]

Flunk Capitalism:

School grades control students

BROOKLYN, NY, October 8—Members of Progressive Labor Party (PLP) hosted a study group of over 20 teachers and students from different countries to discuss the role of grading in a capitalist system. The discussion opened up with a report back from communist teachers who were involved in a rally earlier that day to garner support for Raymond Chalusant, an 18-year old Latin teen who was murdered by the kkkops in the Bronx in July (see last issue).

This day of action and study marks PLP's effort to win more teachers and students to the idea that capitalism uses divisions to keep workers and youth from uniting together and fighting back with communist revolution. In this study group, we put this idea into practice by fighting the division between students and teachers and between speakers of two different languages. At today's study group, the leadership of a teacher in bringing nine students raised the stakes of what is possible to achieve that communist future. Students asked if they could bring friends to the next study group.

Grades conceal the horrors of capitalism

We asked students to take leadership in the study group by starting out the discussion with reflections about their lifelong relationship to grades. Teachers were challenged to engage students with vocabulary such as capitalism, exploitation, racism, and class consciousness to help them link their expertise regarding grades with revolutionary ideas.

Specifically we discussed an article "Grades Are Capitalism in Action. Let's Get Them Out of Our Schools," which argues that grades do not aid learning; instead, it perpetuates capitalism by spreading the lie of meritocracy. The school system prepares the next generation of workers for an inherently unequal system by teaching them that some deserve more than others based on productivity levels. Not only does this give capitalists more productive workers, it also makes workers blame themselves, rather than the system, for what they have, or don't have in adulthood.

These ideas could be heard in some conversations: Some students reported feeling that their classmates—their future fellow workers—were sometimes their biggest obstacle in achieving better grades. These students, just like teachers, can be made to feel resentment toward each other rather than joining forces against their true enemy, the bosses.

There were also clear examples of class consciousness and solidarity amongst the students, as they also spoke about unfair grading practices they felt were keeping all students down and also making students feel depressed. They also spoke of racism and other forms of discrimination affecting students in schools.

Teachers shared that grading hinders, rather



than aids, their ability to teach: Time that could otherwise be used providing useful feedback with students is instead spent mechanically giving students a letter or number that lacks context, an explanation, or productive feedback.

Ultimately, grades give students practice in having their labor exploited by the bosses. They are used to sort students—into As, Bs, Cs, or Fs—and to determine which group of bosses will exploit which students when they join the workforce.

Grades, Big Fascists, and World War III

World War III is on the horizon and understanding what role the working-class students play is crucial. The U.S. ruling class is facing serious consequences if unable to fend off its imperialist Russian rival in Ukraine, and the Russian ruling class is showing no signs of backing down.

Meanwhile, regardless of the grades they receive in school, millions of youth around the world are being won to share the Ukrainian flag, the Russian flag, or the flag of their nationality. Many students with "bad" grades see joining the military as the only possible alternative to a future of suffering within the working class.

Meanwhile, their classmates who get the "best" grades are won to either fight for their national bosses or become the professional workers who ask their fellow workers to be the cannon fodder in an

imminent world war instead.

While Big Fascists (the dominant wing of the U.S. ruling class that is dependent on its imperialist empire) amp up for World War III, Small Fascist Republicans are fighting to make students' education more of an individual family's choice, because they have little interest in maintaining the Big Fascists' expensive project of controlling students through a united public school system. By Small Fascists, we mean the more domestically oriented bosses whose interests are less tied to controlling the flow of foreign oil and hence are less willing to make sacrifices (heavy taxes) for a boots-on-the-ground war against rivals Russia and China.

Meanwhile, Big Fascists are co-opting working-class impulses for multi-racial unity to provide "equal opportunity" for testing for all students. These tests produce grades which are turned on, turned off, and recalibrated based on the needs of these misleaders to pacify the families they say they serve. This is necessary when the capitalist system dives into the types of crises, such as a pandemic, that make parents and students reveal how useless capitalist education is.

For students and teachers, silently accepting grades means accepting the type of self-blame necessary for Big Fascist bosses to implement wider fascism. Fascism is a capitalist system in decay where they can no longer maintain a liberal democracy and instead resort to more direct control and state terror. This includes disciplining their own ranks and building more nationalism and allegiance for the lesser-evil bosses to "save" workers from the Small Fascists.

In order to succeed, the Big Fascists need the open support of a necessary portion of the working class. When students and teachers alike are taught to blame students for their "bad" grades without understanding the system's role in creating that reality, they are supporting the bosses' potential for greater fascism in the future.

Healthy communist struggle and evaluation

In a communist education system, there would be no need for grades. Education and training itself would be the priority, not the division of students into a racist hierarchy for the bosses' profit interests.

Workers from all industries would have more time to focus on the youth, build their confidence, and create a safe environment where theories can be tested in the real world and evaluated. The life-time process of fighting to learn, and learning to fight for the needs of the international working class would be our system of education. Join us!✊

#RiseUptown: Workers need—safe, free, and decent—communist housing

Continued from page 1

In 2020, over 65,000 people experienced homelessness, close to a 12 percent increase from 2019 (Chicago Tribune, 9/20). Racist inequalities, inherent under capitalism, ensured that Black and Latin workers made up the majority of those workers without consistent housing.

In many cities across the U.S. and beyond, various liberal schemes pop up to try to soften the blow, but as expected fall way short. One example is the trend of "tiny houses" which more often than not are constructed of flimsy materials and lack running water, heat or electricity (Guardian, 3/23/17).



Under communism and a worker-run society, safe and equitable housing would be guaranteed and available to all without cost, just as it was when

workers held power previously in the Soviet Union and China. We as workers naturally build all housing, so it should already belong to us! But to win that reality, we have to keep fighting for revolution.

Our class can run society!

The members in #RiseUptown are continuing to work hard, day and night despite much adversity to fight against capitalist-caused displacement and homelessness. Their efforts show that working people have the initiative and courage to organize society in collective ways. PLP will continue to salute and support these grassroots efforts as we advocate for communist revolution to build the world we all need and deserve✊

Retirees fight racist healthcare cuts

NEW YORK CITY, October 12—Hundreds of retired New York City workers rallied outside of city hall today in a continuing struggle to prevent reductions in their health benefits. Retirees have been fighting for over a year against a plan to force them into privatized medical insurance, the Medicare Advantage plan, rather than traditional medicare coverage with city paid secondary insurance. The original plan was for premiums of \$191.00 monthly per person to be charged for those who wanted to opt out of the Medicare Advantage plan. This racist plan meant that low income retirees (disproportionately Black and Latin) would be unable to afford to opt out. Angry retirees understood that Medicare Advantage plans rip off the medicare program in order to insure maximum profits. This was found to be the case by the U.S. inspector general (NYT, 10/8). Retirees also feared that needed tests and treatments would be denied or delayed by profit seeking private insurance companies, again found to be the case in a federal audit (NYT, 4/28). Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members have pointed out that capitalist medicine is dangerous for us all, be it government or private run systems. In a communist run system, medical care would be determined by need, not cost or profit. In the heat of battle, we need to build the PLP so that the alternative of communist run health care becomes real.

PL'ers involved in this struggle have pointed out how "friends" in the city government, led by the Democratic Party (first by Mayor De Blasio and



Communism will mean free healthcare for all

now by Mayor Adams), have teamed up with the main city worker union leaders, the Municipal Labor Committee (MLC) to put retirees into a Medicare (dis)Advantage plan. As the old saying goes, with friends like these, who needs enemies!

Earlier this year, a court ruling allowed the city's new Medicare Advantage plan to begin but denied the city the right to charge premiums to those who wanted to stay with traditional Medicare and a city sponsored secondary insurance they now enjoy. That decision is now being appealed by the city and MLC. Meanwhile the city and MLC have hatched a plan to change the local law upon which the court case was decided.

When PL'ers chant "the cops, the courts, the Ku Klux Klan, all are part of the bosses' plan" we are pointing out how the ruling class uses both state power and their allies to attack the working class. In this struggle, we have seen how the bosses have used their state apparatus and their allies in the unions to attack retirees.

Today's demonstration focused on the plan to change local administrative code 12-126, to undermine the court's finding earlier this year. We are pointing out to current workers that this change could mean the ending of premium free health coverage for them as well as worsening the health coverage for retirees. Retirees once again are appealing to local politicians in the New York City council to block

this change. Relying on the goodness of politicians is a dubious plan at best. It is leading us into the arms of the ruling class. Capitalism rules by many means. Sometimes with an open iron fist. More often by getting workers to follow the leadership of enemies of the working class who lead mass movements like the unions and the Democratic and Republican political parties.

PL'ers stand with our sisters and brothers in fighting back. While doing so, we unmask our class enemies wherever they are and whoever they may be.☸

Haiti:

Smash U.S. Imperialism!



WASHINGTON, DC, October 19—Over 100 protestors rallied in defiance of a possible U.S. imperialist invasion of Haiti. Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members joined this action, making contacts with fighters and bringing revolutionary communist politics to many participants by distributing CHALLENGE widely and pushing political leadership condemning inter-imperialist rivalry. A U.S. invasion of Haiti is bad for workers in Haiti and bad for workers internationally - PLP says smash racist borders!

There is economic and political disarray that has led to hunger, deaths in the street and even the return of cholera. The unelected prime minister, Ariel Henry and 18 members of his cabinet—firmly supported by the Joe Biden White House—have called for international military forces to intervene in Haiti to bring "order" to a society in upheaval. Henry had recently cut fuel subsidies, doubling the price of gasoline, which is now in short supply. The government has also called on the U.S. to send money, weapons, and police trainers to prop up the government and money. The U.S. is open to this. In

addition, the Haitian government has called on the United Nations to intervene militarily.

But history shows us there is no such thing as "humanitarian intervention" in the world imperialist system. U.S. and UN troops occupied and intervened for over 100 years in Haiti, only causing ever greater impoverishment, barbaric violence, dictatorship, fascist repression, and super-exploitation of the working class. The last time the UN invaded, they left a trail of blood. The 13-year U.N. Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) brought cholera to Haiti, which killed 10,000 people and sickened more than 850,000 (AP News, 10/18). The MINUSTAH also raped and sexually exploited women as well as children (Al Jazeera, 10/6/17). THIS is what they mean by "order" and "stability."

We can see other examples of the U.S. empire's global trail of destruction in Nicaragua, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Somalia, and more. Thus another U.S. invasion is a clear and present danger that will plunge the workers in Haiti deeper into the capitalist abyss. Nevertheless, as the CHALLENGE, 10/12 article chronicled, workers in Haiti are militantly

fighting back: "Workers and students, fed up with their daily conditions, have blocked the streets in various neighborhoods, attacked politicians, and broken into and liberated goods from some businesses that have exploited them."

Oust Henry and his U.S. gangsters

On October 17, thousands of workers across Haiti flooded the streets in every state and district holding banners rejecting imperialist intervention, calling for the ouster of Henry (AP News, 10/19). We stand with workers in Haiti in the struggle against the monstrosity that is U.S. imperialism for workers domestically and internationally.

Workers are right to demand Henry's resignation, and we need to go beyond fighting for better reforms or to remove one imperialist puppet or another. As long as the twin evils of capitalism and imperialism exist, workers will be trapped in a vicious cycle of protesting to elect new champions of exploitation and misery to do the bidding of the Haitian rulers and their imperialist partners.

The international working class has the power to put an end to the merry-go-round of death by smashing the profit-grubbing and blood thirsty imperialist system that kills and exploits our class siblings around the world. WE DON'T NEED TO VOTE FOR THE BEST CAPITALIST SERVANT!

The working class must reject the bosses' deadly democracy and poisonous nationalist ideology, and organize in the mass movements. We need to build class conscious, antisexist, antiracist fight-back led by Black workers and working women around the world. We need to consolidate the energy and lessons we learn in every battle against the capitalist imperialist rulers into a powerful revolutionary fighting force capable of turning the imperialist bosses' next global crisis into a class war for communism.☸

The red wrecking ball: communists vs capitalist housing, Part 1

‘The beginning of the revolt’

The following 7-part series is reprinted and lightly edited from the Communist Newspaper Daily Worker in September-October, 1932, written by famous Jewish communist Mike Gold.

Workers here are referred to as Black instead of the original “Negro” to reflect our antiracist principles as well as the linguistic shifts that occurred over decades of antiracist class struggle.

Communists have a long history of fighting against racist attacks on our class. One such fight was against landlords and evictions. In the early 1930s, amid Jim Crow segregation, a great depression with record unemployment levels that sunk the working class—particularly Black workers living in the urban industrial core—into deeper poverty and despair, the Communist Party in the U.S. (CPUSA) was fighting for revolution inside U.S. borders. This period was a golden age of class-conscious fightback when communist ideas were popular and gripped the imaginations of the working class. Under the leadership of the CPUSA, workers organized militant housing, unemployment councils, tenant unions that led bold actions that weakened the power of gluttonous landlords.

Today our class is in a different period marked by increasing volatility. We are choked by record-high inflation, rent hikes, food price gouging compounded by stagnant wages, high unemployment, and an eviction crisis worsened by a still-raging global pandemic. Though the CPUSA is a shell of its former self, decaying into a toothless, reformist party, their history is just as valuable as they were in 1932. This series highlights this antiracist revolutionary fightback and contains kernels of working-class wisdom.

This unemployment is a famine, a Mississippi flood, a major disaster to the human race. More than 50 percent of the Black workers in the city are unemployed. But the Black and white capitalists of Chicago, like their fraternity the world over, have been concerned only with preserving dividends.

A year ago, they were throwing thousands of Black workers out into the naked streets to die. But then a revolt began. Unemployed Councils sprang up, under communist guidance, which fought the evictions. As fast as a poor worker’s furniture was thrown into the street, the councils carried it back. The police used clubs, blackjacks and jail sentences, but the revolt could not be stopped.

The landlords grew desperate. Oscar DePriest, the Black congressman, is also one of the chief landlords on the south side. He retained as lawyers certain other Judas-liberals from the National Association of Advancement for Colored People.

Then he called a secret conference. That night the profit-hoarders and racketeers decided on nothing short of murder.

There was to be an eviction on Dearborn Street the next day. A 72-year old Black working woman was to be kicked out like a dog to die. But the Council arrived to stop the crime.

While they placed back the furniture, the police appeared. This time they did not merely club, maim, gouge and crack skulls. With not the slightest warning, they shot their rifles again and again into the crowd. They killed three Black workers, one of them a communist, and wounded many others.

It was a murder plot. I found proof of this a year later when I came to Dearborn Street.

The brown ruined wooden shacks have not been painted or repaired for decades. They are allowed to rot away. It is the landlord-economy in America to buy up putrid slums that should be burned, and rent them to Black workers. When the homes finally collapse they are torn down. Meanwhile they pay high dividends and cost nothing to maintain.

On Dearborn Street the garbage is heaped everywhere, foul as a landlord’s heart. The city has not removed garbage for months; it is bankrupt. Garbage, flies, stink, leaky roofs, broken windows and doors, moldy wet shacks swarming with vermin; all the houses in crazy tatters and out of plumb.



100,000 workers march at the funeral of three class siblings murdered by kkkops.

This is Dearborn Street, which has sent so many landlord’s wives to Paris, their sons to Harvard or Fisk. And women agonize in childbirth, and strongmen rot of hunger and despair, and babies’ bones shrivel because there is no milk.

The Landlords’ Warning

We went into one of those miserable tenements, and knocked at a door. An old woman answered, a soft-voiced gentle person with a motherly face. She apologizes for her appearance: her gray hair was knotted in paper; she was dressed in a wrapper and apron.

“I’ve been clearing,” she said, “and look a fright, but do come in and rest yourself.” Her home, despite the cracked plaster and grimy walls where lathes stuck out like a pauper’s ribs, was as neat as two hands could make it. It was touching to see her beautiful natural courtesy. It moved one to find her home so painfully clean. Would a landlord’s wife have retained her human dignity in such surroundings?

She was Ms. Martha Ormshees, wife of a stockyard’s worker. She did not want to talk at first; the Black [workers] have learned not to trust white [workers]. But then, convinced that we came from the workers’ press, she told us an amazing fact.

Her windows look out over the spot where the eviction-murders took place. The night before, her landlord had phoned her a warning not to look out of those windows the next day; there would be shooting.

But we did look out until the shots began coming too thick,” she said, “and my husband and I had to throw ourselves on the floor. It was murder; the police warned nobody, just started to shoot. Such a lot of black smoke around; my my, they just kept on shooting and shooting! And those poor people had nothing to fight back with, just a few stones. It wasn’t right. Everyone on this street is still wild about it.

Others on Dearborn Street had much the same story to tell, of whispers, telephone warnings, and the like. It was a plot. The landlords evidently decided to create an atmosphere of fear, to demonstrate to all that they controlled the police. But the plot failed.

Three Black workers were killed, but during the next weeks five thousand others joined the Unemployed Councils; 500 filled out applications to the Communist Party; hundreds of others became members of the International Labor Defense. Many of these Black workers are now in the leadership of

these organizations.

Some of them have since drifted away. The Party in America has not yet worked out some simple, consistent plan that would hold such masses. Yet the South Side was a forest fire of indignation. Nothing else but the eviction-murders was talked about in barbershops, restaurants and churches. Groups of Black workers, after much hunting and questioning, would discover the address of party headquarters and march there in grim, determined squads to join up.

A Great Mass Funeral

There was a mass funeral for Abe Gray, John Oneal, and Thomas Paige, the three victims of the blood stained landlord system. More than 100,000 workers, Black and white, marched through the South Side street, a great solemn army of proletarian vengeance, waving red banners. That day has never been forgotten. It marked the beginning of the revolt.

Hundreds of evictions since then have been foiled by the Unemployment Councils. They take place almost every day. As Brown Squire, one of the leaders, told me, “when the first stick of furniture gets thrown out, a crowd gathers like magic. Somebody unknown telephones at once to the nearest council; everyone knows us. We first send a few delegates to investigate, to see whether the tenant wants us to move him back. If he does, we go there and carry on.”✪



LETTERS

We encourage all **CHALLENGE** readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

GLOSSARY COMMUNIST TERMS Fascism

Capitalism's response to a crisis of their system, when the bosses can no longer sustain the charade of liberal democracy and resort to more direct control and state terror instead. Fascism is marked by the ruling capitalists disciplining their own ranks to serve the urgent needs of the capitalist state and weather the crisis. To defend their system from internal and external threats, they use all the means available in their state apparatus, including violence. To build unity within their class and loyalty from workers, they rely on nationalist politics and calls for sacrifice. Their strategy is to mislead the working class to kill our working class sisters and brothers in the next inter-imperialist war.

Big Fascists

The Big Fascists are the dominant finance capitalist faction of the U.S. ruling class. They represent the wealthiest and most powerful bosses in the U.S., including multinational banks like Chase and Citibank, multinational oil companies like ExxonMobil, the big automakers, Boeing, Amazon, and the major media companies. As the dominant grouping since World War II, the Big Fascists were the architects of the liberal world order with the U.S. bosses on top. Their dominance rests on U.S. financial and military power and its strategic control of the Middle East and the flow of oil to Europe, Asia, and Africa. To sustain this dominance, they need to rebuild a huge, multiracial military for inter-imperialist war, most likely with China.

Small Fascists

The Small Fascists are a group of domestically oriented U.S. capitalists who are challenging the Big Fascists over the direction of U.S. imperialism. Since their interests are less tied to controlling the flow of oil, they are against heavy taxation to keep troops in the Middle East and in general oppose costly military bases and invasions. They're willing to rely on a smaller, whiter army, backed by nuclear weapons and the Air Force. They use open racism to build a political following.

CAPITALISM BREEDS SEXISM RACISM & IMPERIALISM!



FIGHT FOR A COMMUNIST WORLD BUILD THE INTERNATIONAL PLP! PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

Street-vendor workers protest racist harassment

We were at a pro-street vendor coalition protest march. It was a reformist protest, demanding that the city increase the number of licenses for these workers. These workers are harassed daily and persecuted by the police, with numerous fines, which they have to pay. This makes life more difficult for these workers since most of them are undocumented and depend on what they can earn from their daily sales to be able to survive in a city where life is becoming more and more expensive and impossible for the working class. Life is more difficult especially for undocumented immigrants, who are victims of harassment and racism.

Two members of Progressive Labor Party, who are doing the work within a community organization of the coalition, gave leadership several times during the march, shouting our slogans, putting forth our Party's line, and at one point in the march, we very quickly placed a large blanket with the demands in a government office. We also distributed several CHALLENGEs that were enthusiastically taken by people who already knew our paper. It was a day of militant struggle, but only communism will save our entire working class from the atrocities of capitalism.

★★★★★

Two funerals and a revolution

On September 24th CHALLENGE ran an editorial on the death of Queen Elizabeth II. The article did an excellent job juxtaposing the pageantry that surrounded Elizabeth's state-sponsored funeral with the emiseration and destruction her family's British Empire wrought during its peak years. But, Elizabeth's death symbolizes something else for the workers of the world. Her death, coming long after the death of monarchy and feudalism, should remind us that there was a time peasants could not imagine the end of kings and queens. In fact, the English monarchy has existed (and actually ruled) for more than one thousand years. Elizabeth was, for her entire life, nothing but a figurehead, a nostalgic mascot paraded around by capitalists hundreds of years after they themselves violently ended the rule of kings and queens. Capitalism, as an economic system, is still far younger than feudalism was when capitalism overthrew it, and yet many will confidently assure workers that capitalism is the best system possible. They say that communism, an idea barely one hundred-and-fifty years old, has had its day in the sun.

In reality the Soviet Union, the Chinese Revolution, and history's other worker victories are only

the foreshadowing of a worker-run communist world. Whether in the next one hundred years or five hundred years, capitalism's contradictions will lead to the truly productive class, the workers, taking control, just like the capitalists took control from Queen Elizabeth and her predecessors all those years ago. Elizabeth's passing should remind us: there will be a day when workers see a headline commemorating the world's last living capitalist succumbing to old age, and on that day we will shake our heads and say "good riddance."

★★★★★

Looking forward to sharing vision of communism

Edward Bellamy's book, *Looking Backward*, could have been titled "Looking Forward". The first CHALLENGE review moved me to go to the library. I applauded Bellamy's mandatory work for ages 21-45--inclusive of folks with physical or mental challenges. Equal credit cards are distributed for necessities and "luxuries."

Later, on reading our second review, I appreciated pointing out Bellamy's weaknesses: attaining such a society peaceably, omitting racial issues and viewing women in a limited way.

However, the book's best-selling reception indicated he speaks to human needs: 1) Work is a necessity and can be created for those with "lesser" abilities to develop their full potential. The threat of unemployment and cynicism of cutthroat competition is absent. 2) People realize the benefits of their labor when capitalist waste is eliminated: i.e., glut of oversupply and duplication of brand-name goods. I reveled when Bellamy eliminated the monstrous military budget, politicians, and the court system.

Many folks I approach today with our paper agree that capitalism is violent and can only be fought with violence. But questions I hear often are, "How will you motivate people to fight for these values? How can you have a society without money?"

I must remind myself to engage people more around a vision of a communist future. In achieving popular status back in the day, Bellamy's book addressed a universal hunger for these ideas. That said, building a society with productive work and people receiving the fruits of their labor is worth fighting for!

★★★★★

CHALLENGE response: Bellamy's racist eugenics and his disgustingly anti-communist, fascist, and sexist ideas outweigh any of his positive anti-capitalist ideas. Building a communist society requires the fight to eradicate these ideas and practices.

Bolshevik Revolution: workers can run society

Continued from page 8

some measure of a decent life for workers in an incredibly short time, transforming a 90 percent illiteracy rate into one in which nearly everyone was literate.

Around 1938, without any official declaration, the Soviet Union had achieved the era of free bread. One could enter a cafeteria, order little or nothing, and receive all the bread one wanted. You needed, you received. Even during a drive for heavy industry, living standards rose strikingly when the rest of the world was mired in the Great Depression.

The Soviet Union not only freed workers but also fought against racism and sexism. The battle against racism was particularly significant. As communist Paul Robeson said about his trips to the Soviet Union, he “felt like a human being for the first time since I grew up. Here I am not a Negro but a human being. Before I came I could hardly believe that such a thing could be.... Here, for the first time in my life, I walk in full human dignity.”

Heroic fight against the Nazis

In 1941, the bosses again tried to destroy the revolution. Hitler, using all of Europe's resources and the largest military machine ever assembled, invaded the Soviet Union with four million troops. They discovered the Soviets were no pushover as had occurred in Western Europe. Hitler's prediction — endorsed by western military “experts” — of capturing Moscow in six weeks went up in smoke.

Nazi troops found total destruction and desolation in every captured city or town — the “scorched earth” policy. As Soviet defenders retreated, they destroyed everything that the Nazi's might use. The communists then organized armed resistance behind enemy lines: the Partisans.

Over 6,000 factories were dismantled and moved east of the Ural Mountains, re-assembled to produce weapons again, a feat requiring total unity and support of Soviet workers, unmatched by any country, before or since. Soviet soldiers and workers fought for Stalingrad block-by-block, house-by-house and room-by-room to halt the “unbeatable” Nazi invaders. Workers in arms factories produced weapons 24 hours a day for the Red Army, working 12-hour shifts. When Nazi troops captured factories, heroic Soviet workers and soldiers would re-take them.

The entire German Sixth Army and 24 of Hitler's generals were surrounded and killed or captured

DEATH TO FASCISM!



in the battle of Stalingrad. Never again would the Nazis mount a successful offensive against the Red Army. Stalingrad was truly the turning point of the Second World War. Not until the Nazis were on the run following their defeats at Stalingrad and in the Battle of the Kursk — the biggest armored battle in world history, involving millions of soldiers and 6,000 tanks — did the U.S.-U.K. forces invade Western Europe. It was the communist-led Soviet Union that smashed the Nazis, the largest and most powerful army ever mounted by a capitalist power.

All this was accomplished under the leadership of Josef Stalin. No wonder he is reviled to this day by world capitalism.

Lessons learned

Unfortunately, the Bolsheviks suffered from many political weaknesses, which led to the return of capitalism to the Soviet Union. From the beginning they believed that to achieve communism, first socialism had to be established, a belief Karl Marx had advanced. We have learned from that experience that socialism retained capitalism's wage system and therefore failed to wipe out many aspects of the profit system. Socialism put forward material incentives to the working class rather than political ones as the way to win workers to communism. We must win masses of workers to abolish capitalism's entire wage system and fight directly

for communism.

Today, no country is led by communists, but this is a temporary historical setback. While this long and volatile era of widening imperialist wars and fascist attacks on the working class is upon us, every dark night has its end.

The Progressive Labor Party is a product of both the old international communist movement and the struggle against its weaknesses. Pseudo-leftist groups have not learned history's lessons and continue to fight for nationalist “sharing of power” with capitalists, a la Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, not for the working-class seizure of power and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Our movement is daily fighting to learn from the Soviet Union's great battles and achievements as well as its deadly errors that led to its collapse, mainly that reformism, racism, nationalism and all forms of concessions to capitalism only lead workers to defeat. Give the ruling class an inch and they'll grab a mile.

We honor the bold fight by the workers of the Bolshevik Revolution against capitalism and for a working-class communist world. Today, we must organize workers, students and soldiers to build a mass worldwide working class party that will turn this era of imperialist wars into a new, international communist revolution.✊



RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Capitalist powers choosing sides as world gears up for growing war

Al Jazeera, 10/16—United States President Joe Biden has “no plans” to meet with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman at next month's G20 summit in Indonesia, a senior US official says, as tensions over the OPEC+ decision to cut oil production continue to reverberate. Relations between the US and Saudi Arabia are on thin ice over the oil production cuts. Last week, the Riyadh-led OPEC cartel and an additional group of 10 other oil producers headed by Russia decided to reduce global output by up to two million barrels per day from November. The move is expected to lead to higher oil prices, which would help Russia pay for its offensive in Ukraine.

Biden has warned Saudi Arabia that there will be unspecified “consequences” for siding with Russia in supporting the cuts. The OPEC+ move undermines Western countries' plans to impose a cap on the price of Russian oil in response to Moscow's war in Ukraine. The move could lead to soaring energy prices, raising concerns in Biden's Democratic Party about how it will fare in November's midterm elections. Washington suggested Gulf producers were aligning with Russia at the expense of the United States and its Western allies.

U.S. preparing economy for war with China

The Economist, 10/13— “China's government is planning on winning the ai race, winning future

wars and winning the future,” warned Todd Young, an American senator, in July.

Western countries are embarking on a frantic effort to retain or regain their technological edge. On October 7th America issued fierce new restrictions on exports to China of advanced semiconductors and related equipment. “It's a total clamp down, trying to cut off every head of the hydra of China's chip industry.”

China's output of a basket of sophisticated goods including information technology, pharmaceuticals and electronics is expected to surpass America's this year...As well as trying to disrupt the flow of technology abroad, America's government is investing more in innovation. In August Congress approved \$370bn of spending on green energy, including lots of money for research.

D.R.C. is a key battlefield for U.S. and Chinese imperialists

Agence France Presse, 9/30— A military prosecutor in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) on Monday requested the death penalty for 11 people allegedly implicated in the murder of two Chinese mine workers this year. On March 17, a convoy of Chinese nationals returning from a gold mine came under attack in the village of Nderemi in Ituri province. Two Chinese workers were killed. A military tribunal launched proceedings against 12 people, including 11 army members, on charges of murder and criminal conspiracy...During a hear-

ing on Monday, military prosecutor Colonel Kumbu Ngoma requested the death penalty for 11 of the suspects, who include two army colonels. Attacks on Chinese-managed mines and Chinese workers are not uncommon in resource-rich eastern DRC.

The revolution will not be on Twitter

New York Times, 09/30—Social media, which enables protests to organize and gather in once-unthinkable numbers, often with little or no formal leadership, may also paradoxically undermine those movements, according to a theory advanced by Zeynep Tufekci, a Columbia University sociologist. In earlier eras, activists might spend months or years building the organizational structures and real-world ties necessary to launch a mass protest. This also made movements durable, instilling discipline and chains of command.

Social media allows would-be protesters to skip those steps, spurring one another to action with as little as a viral post. The result is rallies that put thousands or millions of bodies in the street overnight — but that often fizzle just as quickly. Without that traditional activist infrastructure, social media protests are less equipped to endure government repression. Leaderless, they more easily fracture and struggle to coordinate strategically.

Protests were traditionally just one tool in activist campaigns to pressure governments...social media, by channeling popular energy away from such organizing, means that mass protest is now often the only tool, and typically ineffective on its own.”

BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION: WORKERS SEIZED POWER



The working class seized state power under the communist leadership of the Bolsheviks and Vladmir Lenin.

One hundred and five years ago, November 7, 1917, marked the beginning of the single most important event of the 20th century, the Bolshevik Revolution, which directly inspired the Chinese Revolution and anti-imperialist struggles around the world from Vietnam to Africa to Latin America.

Russia's working class, headed by the revolutionary communists of the Bolshevik Party and its leader, Vladimir Lenin, freed one-sixth of the world's surface from capitalism. They proved once and for all that it was possible to strive for a world without exploitation, where those who produce all value, the working class, can enjoy the fruits of their labor and not have it stolen by a few parasitical bosses and their lackeys.

The Bolshevik Revolution was the first serious attempt by workers and peasants to seize, hold and consolidate state power. Even though capitalism has returned to the former Soviet Union, workers will not forget that the Soviet working class defeated capitalism in 1917. They smashed the imperialist armies of 17 countries (including Japan,

the U.S., Britain, France, among others) which invaded Russia in 1918 to try to crush the revolution. They freed the masses, especially women, from the yoke of capitalist, feudal and religious oppression. And then in 1945 the Soviet Red Army defeated the mightiest and most barbaric army the capitalists had ever organized: the Nazi Wehrmacht.

The revolution frightened the world's bosses, who immediately sent armies from 17 countries to try—in Churchill's words—to "strangle it in the cradle." From 1918 to 1923, millions of workers led by the Red Army defeated the imperialists' counter-revolution. Nearly five million died in that battle, many of whom were the most committed workers the revolution had produced. Lenin himself died because of injuries inflicted by a hired killer.

The masses showed great courage and determination to defend and build their revolution, under the leadership of their revolutionary party. They proved that revolutionary violence on the part of the working class and peasantry was vital to the seizure of state power.

Achievements of the Bolshevik Revolution

The Bolshevik Revolution brought the Soviet Union to heights of productive development that capitalism, given a similar time period and circumstances, could never have dreamed of. Bringing the working class to power, the Revolution coordinated their social-economic efforts for the production and exchange of the necessities, the comforts and even some luxuries of life, making them available to all. The Soviet system of production was for use, not for profit. This can only be accomplished by abolishing capitalist profits and the private ownership of property, with its exploitation, poverty, unemployment, racism, fascism and imperialist wars.

In the 1930s, when the entire capitalist world sank into depression, and tens of millions worldwide were left jobless and starving (much like today), the Soviet Union was forging ahead building a new society without unemployment. They created

Continued on page 7

CHALLENGE strives to be the communist paper for and by the international working class. We call on all readers, supporters, and comrades to submit class struggle articles, analytical pieces, original photos and graphics, letters, and political cartoons. The next deadline is the **Friday evening of October 14**. Send to desafio.challenge@gmail.com. For some guidance and house style rules, please go to:

www.bit.ly/338ZJow

All submissions are open to collective discussion, struggle, and change. See box on page 2 about fighting for collectivity and against a cult of the individual.

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